"Unity House" Will Be a Hotel With Ideals

A Woman's Trade Union Buys a Bargain Sale Hotel on Co-operative Plan

By INIS WEED

THOUGHTFUL people everywhere will rejoice in the fine constructive form that labor's desire for liberty and the pursuit of happiness has taken among the largest organized group of girls in this country. The Ladies' Waist and Dressmakers' Union has bought outright one of the most delightful year-round hotels within easy reach of New York in which to rest and play. It is the Forest Park Hotel, in the Blue Mountains of Pennsylvania. The purchase includes 700 acres of forest clad hills, a tract larger than Central Park, with here and there a farm in the valley. Back of the hotel and its cluster of a dozen cottages is an eighty-acre lake. This hostlery, where the rich and the well-to-do paid a minimum of $50 a week for a room and board and where one of their employers paid $100 a week for a small suite, they are going to run coöperatively, enabling them to live there for $15.50 per week!

This plant cost over $500,000. But with the Nemesis of July 1 advancing steadily and inexorably toward the innkeepers of the United States the desire to get rid of their respective hostleries resulted in bargain counter offers of hotels that enabled the girls to buy this one for $85,000. A bargain, indeed, and only $15,000 more is required to adapt it to coöperative use. Even so, however, the public does rather open its eyes at the thought of girls, most of them young, doing business on the $100,000 scale. Consider, though, the size of the organization and what a sum 30,000 girls can invest in an undertaking if they each contribute only one day's earnings.

The project has the good wishes of manufacturers in the garment world—even of the one for whom the $250 suite will no longer be available! For what does the manufacturer desire more than healthy, vigorous employes?

The cynical reader will probably make pessimistic prophecies as to the successful business management of these young, enthusiastic girls, but only if they do not know their history as hotel managers. For three years past they have rented a hotel, each year a larger one, and demonstrated their ability to make such a venture really go. The trouble has been to find one large enough. Even this one, which accommodates 500 guests, is not adequate. If every girl goes out for one week during the next four months only about 9,000 will be able to secure rooms. The plan is to add to the dozen cottages now in the park until there are enough to meet the demand.

Economic Unity Plus Real Fellowship

These girls, the finest of whom have been the inspiration of the garment workers of the country, are a remarkable group, and their psychology repays careful study at this time, when the world is filled with upheavals. They are building up a spirit of fellowship and sisterhood on some other basis than that of hours, wages and hatred of their employer. They crave something more than economic unity. They want their organization to afford them a larger vision of life, real happiness and contact with what great artists and writers have given to the world.

About 70 per cent of the girls are Jewish and 20 per cent Italian, races eager to know and to feel. They want contact with nature, too, and now, thank God! they're going to have it. As one little girl at the union headquarters said, "The poor don't go to cheap, noisy summer resorts from choice, but because they can't afford to go to simple, quiet places." She glanced down at the folder of their coöperative hotel at Forest Park. "Look at that great forest. How beautiful it is!" And she sighed happily.

It was during their first summer's experiment in running a summer place that many of the girls became conscious of spiritual forces half submerged that were coming to the surface in a happy group life away from the roar of machines and the crowding of tenements. Out in hills, where they played in the sunshine, built great campfires on fine nights or gathered around the fireplaces on rainy ones and sang Yiddish and Italian folksongs together; out by themselves where they were rested enough for fine talks and fine books to sink in and take on new meaning—this demand that their union should give every one of its thousands of members new life and new happiness from greater resources within themselves was born.

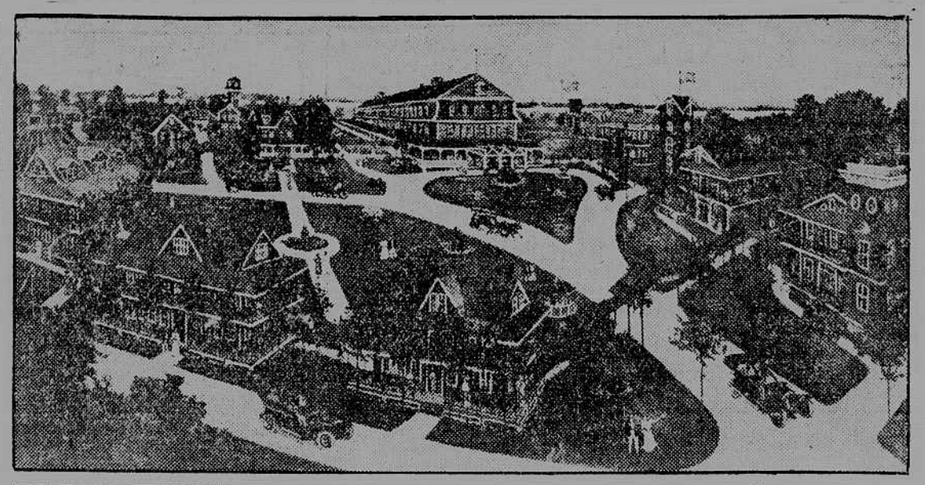
They wanted a great club building in New York that should give them meeting space and classes and parties, but that was too much to undertake at first, said the more careful ones. They cast about for some place to have a unity centre and found they could make use of the public school buildings. Public School 40 became their home. In three months they had their members meeting in the public school for business and for classes in literature, economics, industry, languages and dozens of other subjects. Another public school had to be utilized to hold the overflow and a cafeteria was established so that the girls might come directly from work and get home from classes early enough to get a good night's sleep before the next day's work.

Practical Experience and High Ideals Behind This Venture

Thus after three years of working together and managing their summer hotels they do not enter into this Forest Park experiment as amateurs. A knowledge of the ideals behind this big coöperative experiment serves to give the student of present industrial conditions a conception of the integrating forces behind the venture. Probably no summer hotel has ever had more idealism put into its management and life than this new Unity House, which has room to expand indefinitely.

There will be men there, as well as girls, for there are some men in the union, and there will be proper accommodation and amusements for people of all tastes—swimming, plenty of bath houses and a concrete pool for timid bathers; canoes, boats, bass fishing, touring cars, tennis courts, baseball, basketball, clock golf, croquet, bowling, pool, billiards, endless shady paths and pine groves, the summer garden where sodas, sundaes and ices will replace John Barleycorn; a pavilion with a Broadway orchestra, concerts, lectures. There's a sport and athletic director and, if he should be needed, a resident physician. The manager has been engaged, expert buyers are being considered, carpenters are busy, the boats are getting a new coat of paint, the tennis courts are being rolled. Everything is humming for the June opening of this girl's coöperative hotel.

It is the sort of coöperation that will counteract the disintegrating forces at work to destroy both capital and labor, and it is fundamentally sound because it is "self help," not philanthropy.



Moonlight and sunlight will see "doings" on the lake

A bird's-eye view of hotel and cottages—and a close-up

Nothing Will Be Too Good for Little Waistmakers—for $12.50 a Week

When Men Handle Lace And Women Levers

EDITOR OF THE TRIBUNE: In an interview reported recently in a Sunday Tribune Mrs. Raymond Robins expressed the opinion that in the present industrial crisis women will retain in a measure the work they have taken up during the war, and that incompatibility between the job and the worker will adjust itself for them as with the men. This latter clause suggests a question that has troubled many of us during the war, namely, What combination of traditions and superstitions regulates the division of labor between the sexes, anyway?

Can you throw any light upon it?

To take a few of the most common examples: Why are men almost exclusively employed in jewelry stores, and in handling books, pictures, furniture and dress goods? This work would seem to be compatible with the strength and natural fitness of women.

Last winter, when women appeared in almost every department of labor, we put it down to "war conditions," and, not being a thinking people, didn't feel the inconsistency of going downtown in a street car run by a woman and then purchasing stickpins, hot chocolate, parlor curtains, dress goods and rocking chairs exclusively from men. The newspapers told us that the women were loyally doing their bit for the country because the men were scarce. And we were content.

I made a round of the department stores to verify this impression, and found in each case the same anomalous situation: In the departments where business was rushed and bargains were being scrambled for, invariably women clerks; in the cool and quiet regions of furniture, rugs, pictures, etc., men. Many of the latter were of draft age—what families or dependents they may have had, alas! I know not.

At present, with the advent of the elevator girl, the situation is even more pronounced. During the last week I visited five of the leading department stores in an effort to match a piece of satin. In all of these places the satins were sold by men and the elevators run by women. I was old-fashioned enough to confess to a slight feeling of rebellion. Is it a matter of choice, or natural fitness, or some mysterious law of the managers? The elevators were being run by women; the silks were, I presume, being effectively sold by the men. In my own case it was a bit discouraging to find that three of the men were partially color blind. The elevator girls all looked under twenty. Perhaps there is an age limit in the silk business. I went up two flights with one young woman. She pulled two heavy levers twenty times in making the trip, called each floor, both ways, naming its contents, answered seventeen foolish questions politely. (Samples: "No, madam; next floor." "Furniture third, madam." "Yes, madam, millinery here, to your right," etc.) Strange to say, she did not appear out of breath when she reached the last floor, but her eyes were feverish and her back was aching. She was neat, intelligent looking, businesslike. Of the men who waited upon me among the silk and dress goods all were apparently of middle age and in sound health, except two; one of these was slightly lame, the other suggested tuberculosis. They looked as intelligent as many a man I have seen holding down a man-sized job.

Now, these conditions may have a perfectly logical explanation, but I have not been able to find any one who knows it. Several possibilities suggest themselves. Men may simply prefer to sell goods in the quiet, out-of-the-way departments, while women love the busy stir of the bargain counter. Men may like to handle lace, and women levers. If so, who would wish to intrude the idea of "fitness"? It may be a matter of natural ability. Here, however, I pause for reply. Have women proved failures in handling books, jewels or dress goods? Have men better taste in such matters? Are women better mechanics?

Pending an inquiry into the matter of the woman on the job and the returning soldier, I should be very glad of some light on this subject.

E. G. Curtis.

Julia Ward Howe

MAY 27 was the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Julia Ward Howe, author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," to the music of which many an American man in the last two years has marched.

Nearly half a century ago, a little while after the Civil War, Julia Ward Howe said to the men and women of Massachusetts:

"America is to the nations a house of God—a divinely appointed city of refuge. We have learned some lessons; we have opened some doors. What one should be and know and intend, in order to come up to the standard of an American—that is something which as yet puts most of us to the blush, not for being so much, but so little, children of the New World. I cannot see this New World as it ought to be without many changes in what it is. Looking toward this great aim of building a Christian state I see the position of woman as wrong and harmful—wrong to herself, wrong to society."

Mrs. Howe said this after one great war in which America was engaged, and when women had just begun their struggle for the Federal suffrage amendment.

After another great war Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt says:

"Is an America which every citizen may love and under whose flag every citizen may feel secure what we want? Is an America freed from the combined threat of alternative control by aggressive reaction and that of revolution worth while? Then all the progressive forces of the nation must be united to bring it about, and we must do our part. It needs sane heads, constructive plans and earnest work. Does the task seem overwhelming?

"All things worth having are possible. I believe in my America; I believe in her ideals, her common sense, her responsiveness to duty. When she understands, she has never proved false to a single appeal to justice. She has never failed to rise to her full measure of greatness when the call has been made.

"What could be more natural than that women who have attained their political independence should desire to give service in token of their gratitude? What could be more appropriate than that such women should do for the coming generation what those of a preceding period did for them? What could be more patriotic than that these women should use their freedom to make their nation safe for their children and their children's children?"

Child Welfare the Phoenix Of Belgian Fires

BELGIUM has begun to lift up its head from the horrors of war and feebly to look for the blessings of adversity.

One of the first discovered of these, according to Professor René Sand, of the University of Brussels, is the lesson in child welfare work born out of the necessities of the German occupation. Dr. Sand is the professor of social and industrial medicine and adviser on medical inspection of the Minister of Labor. At present he is touring the United States at the invitation of President Wilson and the Children's Bureau, which is conducting a series of the lessons of child welfare which have grown out of the war.

"When the German occupation drove our national officials from the country," said Dr. Sand, "there were left only petty local officials. Impelled by the emergency, they organized a loose sort of federation and took over many national functions. Belgium had never developed any extensive system of child welfare work, but with the fathers all gone to war and the Germans in control of the food supplies pretty much the whole national problem was the problem of keeping the children alive. Radical steps were taken then that would not have come to my country probably in many years of normal development.

War Brought This Need to Light

"For example, before the war we had only sixty health centres in our large cities; now we have six hundred. Before the war we had seventeen milk stations where mothers could buy pure milk for their babies at a low price; now we have seven hundred. This is thanks to your American commission, which supplied 1,000,000,000 gallons of milk for our babies and to which we owe their lives to-day. It is a wonderful thing that during the war infant mortality actually decreased in our country.

"The older children, who could not live on milk alone, did not fare as well. In spite of all the efforts of our people, the children suffered physically and spiritually from the war and from the German occupation. They are all one year behind in normal growth physically, and from one to three years below the normal intellectually. The average boy in Brussels lost one pound in weight during the four years of war and the average girl seven pounds.

"The people sacrificed everything to keep the children alive. The best wheat they could secure—which was not so wonderful, either—was saved for the children. It was made into biscuits and served to the children in schools, where they were compelled to eat. These biscuits were so superior to the average bread allowed to adults that they acquired the name 'school cakes.'"

"Belgium will never forget the generosity of America in the hour of its affliction. Even now our little children are repeating a new prayer, 'We thank God and America for our daily bread.' Can you imagine what those nine little words on the lips of the coming generation of Belgium will mean in the way of national friendship in the future?

"Already," Dr. Sand laughed, "I find the propaganda of friendship between the two countries has had its effect on my own ten-year-old son. He accompanied me to your country, and after he saw the dazzling towers of New York and had an afternoon at your circus, he announced:

"'I'm going to stay here and be an American.'

"I have put him in an American boarding school, and here he will stay, for a while, at least. I cannot find it in my heart to deny him his wish to be an American. If he grows up to have a real understanding of your great country, to teach our people that you have a great national spirit, as well as wheat mills and condensed milk manufactories, he may be one of those who will in the future have a chance to help repay Belgium's debt of gratitude." Emma Bugbee.

The Texas Victory

COMMENTING on the Texas victory, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, said:

"In some respects the Texas victory is the greatest state victory that suffrage has ever scored.

"For one thing Texas is the first state in the far South to give women full suffrage; it is the largest state in area; it had the shortest pre-campaign period of preparation; it met with the bitterest opposition. Led by an impeached ex-Governor of Texas, the 'antis' fairly outdid themselves in vicious vituperation. So raw, so crude were they that the Texas press repeatedly administered scathing rebukes during the campaign, and the Texas lower house one day, finding the anti-suffrage brand of matter on the desks of members, voted overwhelmingly in condemnation of such campaign literature.

"In point of area Texas, it will be remembered, has 265,896 square miles. This means that you could pick up the 243,327 square miles of Great Britain, Belgium, Continental Italy, and put them down in Texas with a nice wide fringe of 22,569 miles hanging over, enough to let European Turkey, Montenegro and Alsace-Lorraine rattle around in.

"In point of the number of women enfranchised, the Texas victory is also one of the greatest, the total number of women in Texas over voting age being close to a million—999,166.

"Texas is the sixteenth state to win full suffrage. All the state victories have been won by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, through its state branches, as a part of the national's programme to secure the passage of the Federal suffrage amendment. In the result, there is now a force of fifteen and a half million women over voting age back of the demand for the passage and ratification of the Federal suffrage amendment."

One Woman Did This; What Could We Do Together?

By Winifred Duncan Ward

Dannemora State Prison, N. Y.

DEAR Mrs. Baright: I am about to relate to you a pitiful story, and do so because I think of you not only as my attorney, but my personal friend and adviser.

It has been four weeks since I heard anything from my wife; to-day I received a letter telling me that my wife has left home, leaving the baby with my mother-in-law. Mrs. Baright, I implore you to take steps which will insure my immediate release. Quick action on your part may save my wife and family. Please do your best, so that my wife and child shall not be motherless. I have a little jewelry of my own, and I will convert it into money if you say so" . . .

"Well," said I, helping myself to another baked potato, "how can they expect you to be bothered with such details—what can you do about it?"

What She Did About It

"Do about it?" said Mrs. Baright, with emphasis.

(Clarice M. Baright, it is rumored, will soon be appointed judge in the Children's Court in this city.)

"My dear, I believe that man to be as innocent as you or I. I am fighting tooth and nail to get him out." And what was more, Mrs. Baright found time to hunt up this man's wife, find out the details of the family quarrel which had caused her temporarily to leave hime, and write to that man in Dannemora a kind and reassuring letter.

"Well, why on earth," said I, "should you be expected to investigate the family affairs of this man simply because you happen to be pleading a case for him in court?"

"Because," said Mrs. Baright, with still more emphasis, "I think that man is shielding his wife from a crime which she committed, and not he." And I had my first glimpse into a mind which had grasped a fact which mine overlooked—that no detail of human life is unimportant to one whose business is to save lives.

But her vital interest at the moment is the abolition of child labor, and among the nineteen organizations in this city to which she belongs she is appealing to women to get together and work with her, so that if the appointment as judge in the Children's Court comes this spring it will not be Mrs. Baright alone who begins the big fight for better conditions among children, but a thousand women who know what she stands for and who stand with her.

There appeared recently in "The Evening World" (quoted from "The Star Bulletin," Sing Sing's weekly paper) an article in which Mrs. Baright was given credit for being—

The second woman to be admitted to the State Bar Association.

The first woman in the United States to defend a man before a court-martial.

Mrs. Clarice Margoles-Baright

The first woman ever appointed to sit as a member of a lunacy commission.

"And we wish," says "The Star Bulletin," "to go 'The World' one better and add another 'first' to the list: She is first in the hearts of many men who have paid their debt to the state and gone their way—a better way, in many instances, because of her disinterested helpfulness."

Mrs. Baright has worked out a bill to be presented to the next Legislature having as its object the creating of a great state farm for mental derelicts, but the biggest fight at present is this one growing directly out of her work in the Children's Court.

Four Million Illiterates

"Do you realize," said she, "that there are 4,000,000 native-born men and women in the United States who can neither read nor write? Do you know that in the war draft alone there were 700,000 illiterate grown men? There are schools which do not teach English; each state has its own educational system."

"What about child offenders?" said I.

"It's the misuse of surplus energy that gets most youngsters into trouble," she replied. "I hope, with the coöperation of women, to institute an educational system which will recognize this. The fight for us women is to get international labor laws, the bettering of the schools, the removal of illiteracy, care of mental defectives and the changing of prison laws. These are the things for women to understand. If the man in prison for thirty-nine years had had these things he wouldn't be there now."

Mrs. Baright is on the board of the Society for the Aid of Mental Defectives and is a trustee of the Toynbee House Settlement.

Another point which Mrs. Baright makes very strongly and from her personal experience with cases in the Children's Court is that the education of parents is quite as important as that of the children, for one cannot be conducted without the other. To give children compulsory education while the parent is antagonistic is but adding to the burdens of the child.